



## PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN MASS MEDIA EDUCATION IN POLAND

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**Abstract.** Practical development of modern mass media education in Poland. The paper analyzes the main ways of practical development of modern media education (1992-2012 years) in Poland: basic technologies, main events, etc.

**Keywords:** media education, media literacy, practical approaches, technologies.

### Principal developmental milestones of media education in Poland

P. Drzewiecki, a Polish researcher, justly asserts that the development of media education in Poland before the early 1990s was attended with great difficulties [Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 35]. Honestly, from the point of view of the modern media education level that provides for media text perception, analysis, creation and distribution, development of analytical thinking and media competence that are free from ideological censorship, Poland which was part of the "Soviet camp" as they say was "substandard". However, as well as in the Soviet Union, media education in the Polish People's republic in the 1960s – 1980s though being under the ideological control developed in the form of elective classes, circles, film clubs, amateur film/photo studios, school and high school press, etc. [See for example: Koblewska, 1965; 1980]. At the same time, as well as in the USSR, there dominated two pedagogical approaches – practical (based on teaching media text creation in the press, radio, photography, film making, and television) and aesthetic (based on art media text perception and analysis).

In connection with significant political and economic changes in the 1990s media education in Poland got its second wind. Polish media educators began to actively implement foreign, and first of all, the European experience. Problems of media competence development got on the agenda. In 1996, the Polish Society for Technologies and Educational Media was created. From 1996 to 2003 a quarterly journal "Media Education" came out. Media education movement (both at universities and at schools) spread in such Polish cities as Warsaw, Gdansk, Katowice, Lublin, Poznan, Torun, etc.

Since 1998 media education in Poland was integrated with the humanities (for example, Polish and Literature), the scope of published media education programs, training manuals, monographs and articles extended. At the same time, one could often hear in the society the opinions underlying the necessity of introducing autonomous media studies/courses as well [Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 37].

Since the beginning of the 21st century the National Council for Radio and Television began to supervise the development of media education at national level. The ideas concerning a complex development of media education in Poland including the appropriate training of teachers and the involvement of public organizations, libraries and local authorities in media education were put forward. The conferences in Kelts (2000) and Warsaw (2000) were devoted to media education problems. In 2002, the National Council for Radio and Television held a meeting with the participation of media education experts where the further evolution of media education in Poland was discussed. In the sequel, there were such problems as limitation of harmful media effects on the under-age audience, initiation of the bill of media violence propaganda prohibition, media agencies involvement in media education, in particular, television and Internet (EdukacjaMedialna.pl or Edunews.pl) in the focus of public discussions in Poland.

In 2005, the Polish Film Institute (PFI) was established. It carried out a number of projects connected with media education. Thus packets with 50 DVDs containing game, documentary and animation films were sent to 14,000 polish schools. Each of them was selected by experts according to their training programs [Lipszyc, 2012].

The entry of Poland into the European Union enabled polish media educators to rely on such solutions as European Parliament resolution on media literacy in a digital world [Resolution..., 2008]. In this connection it was asserted that media education should be part of lifelong learning and should involve not only preschool children, school and university students, the under-age audience as a whole but also teachers, parents, adults, pensioners.

Unlike Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia media education in Poland has not become compulsory at schools yet. The Ministry of Education agreed with the general conceptions about the necessity of media education but would not introduce special courses in media culture thus having integrated the media education component in different school subjects. At the same time, media studies are available in the form of autonomous elective courses.

In 2009, in Poland there emerged new initiatives of European media education advancement in schools. In particular, the Polish Media Bureau that expanded opportunities for audiovisual specialists to efficiently use European Union grants was created. The Media Bureau organized conferences on media literacy problems [Lipszyc, 2012]. In the same year the National Media Education Program was adopted and the Polish Association for Media Education was established. In this connection on June 19, 2009, a conference devoted to problems of the further development of media education in Poland took place in Warsaw. As well as in Europe the development of media education here is associated now with civic education and democracy, development of community oriented mass media. All this contributes both to formal (in educational institutions) and informal (for example, through the Internet) media education of the audience.

It should be noted that the crucial role here is also played by the Polish Catholic Church. Particularly, in Poland there is a specialized journal – Biuletyn Edukacji Medialnej oriented towards religious approaches to media education. Here are some themes touched upon in articles of this journal: "Man, family, health and media", "Parents' role in media education of children", "About the initiation of the polish classification system of audiovisual production", "Collaboration of theologians and media specialists as a basis of Christian democracy", "Media education role in the new academic program of the general secondary education of school students", "Media manipulations", "Violence in the media", "Psychosocial aspects of mass media influence", "Media education in 2008–2011: most relevant initiatives, problems, development prospects", "Desecration of religious values in modern media", "Blog as a new challenge for media education: blogs of priests and friars", "Feminism and media", "Religious attitude as a basis for action films selection", "Religious content in mass media" [Biuletyn..., 2004-2012].

Leading Polish media educators who are Catholics (T. Zasepa, etc.) publish articles, monographs and teaching aids [Ilowiecki, Zasepa, 2003; Lecicki, 2010; Wrobel, 2005, etc.] which reflect their views grounded on the synthesis of the theological and protectionist media education theories and underline the importance of the spiritual development of a personality. Naturally, the moral aspect of media education is vital for church since each believer is responsible for their choice of media contacts.

## **Media education programs, technologies in modern Poland**

One of the most active modern Polish media educators – P. Drzewiecki elaborated a special three-year program for media education of school students (average and advanced age) including the following basic tasks [Drzewiecki, 2010, pp. 86-87]:

- development of pupils' basic media communication skills;
- knowledge enlargement about mass media;
- awareness of disturbing phenomena in modern media culture;

– development of well-grounded, critical and selective methods for pupils' communication with media;

– development of students' media competence and moral responsibility in communication with mass media.

Some events aimed at studying basic skills in journalism and media (for example, creation of an Internet site, school newspapers, television/radio conferences, interviewing technology, advertising) require additional cooperation of the media teacher with other teachers and different organizations and institutions.

These are but a few topics of media studies: "What do we need media literacy for?", "Critical and creative thinking", "Role play", "Books and the press", "Audiovisual media", "Radio and television", "Multimedia and the Internet", "Computer games", "Advertising and PR", "Film education" [Drzewiecki, 2010, pp. 89-95].

It concerns both monitoring of the pupils' acquired knowledge of media theory and culture and their practical skills in media creation (to write a short article, review; to prepare a survey, reportage, interview, presentation, placard; to participate in role plays including a release of newspapers, radiobroadcasts, etc. in teams). Besides, to prepare an essay on certain themes connected to cultural and social aspects of the media. Pupils gain additional points for their active work at all the lessons.

P. Drzewiecki also created a media education site PressCafe.eu which contains texts of articles, reports and other published works devoted to media education. A similar site entitled "Media Teacher" (<http://www.edukatormedialny.pl>) was created by G. Stunzhi, a reader of the pedagogical faculty of Gdańsk University.

A special significance is attached in Poland to media competence development - "a composite harmony of knowledge, understanding, estimation and skillful usage of the media" [Strykowski, 2004, p. 33]. It stands for knowledge in the history of media culture, media theories, media language; understanding of the role, mechanisms and the extent of media influence in the modern society; abilities to control one's media contacts, to select the necessary media texts of miscellaneous types and genres, to interpret and analyze media texts; to use ICT, to create own media texts [Strykowski, 2004, pp. 35-37; Juszczyszk, 2004, pp. 67-71].

**Table 1.** Media Education Practice in Modern Poland

N	Media education situation	Polish media educational organizations, publishing houses, Internet sites, programs, educational courses
1	Leading media educational institutions	National Council for Radio and Television ( <a href="http://www.krrit.gov.pl/">http://www.krrit.gov.pl/</a> ) Polish Film Institute ( <a href="http://www.pisf.pl/pl">http://www.pisf.pl/pl</a> ) Polish Media Bureau ( <a href="http://www.mediadeskpoland.eu/">http://www.mediadeskpoland.eu/</a> ) New Horizons - Association for Film Educators ( <a href="http://www.nhef.pl/">http://www.nhef.pl/</a> ) Scientific educational network ( <a href="http://www.nask.pl/">http://www.nask.pl/</a> ) New Media Fund ( <a href="http://fundacjanowemedia.org/~V">http://fundacjanowemedia.org/~V</a> ) Information Society Development Fund - Education ( <a href="http://www.terazedenkacja.pl/">http://www.terazedenkacja.pl/</a> ) Media Evolution Fund ( <a href="http://www.mediaevo.pl/">http://www.mediaevo.pl/</a> ) ABCXXI - All Poland Read for Children ( <a href="http://www.calapolskaczytadzieciom.pl/">http://www.calapolskaczytadzieciom.pl/</a> ) LiterNet Foundation ( <a href="http://litternet.pl/">http://litternet.pl/</a> ) Press-Café: PressCafe.eu ( <a href="http://presscafe.eu/">http://presscafe.eu/</a> ) Media Educator ( <a href="http://www.edukatormedialny.pl/">http://www.edukatormedialny.pl/</a> ) Media Education ( <a href="http://www.edukacjamedialna.pl/">http://www.edukacjamedialna.pl/</a> ) Media Olympics ( <a href="http://www.olimpiada-medialna.edu.pl/">http://www.olimpiada-medialna.edu.pl/</a> ) Centre for Media Education - Centrum Edukacji Medialnej SpesMediaGroup ( <a href="http://www.kuria.lomza.pl/index.php?k=360">http://www.kuria.lomza.pl/index.php?k=360</a> )

2	Journals and full-text e-libraries on media education, issue of books, learning aids, educational programs on media education	Journal "Media Education Bulletin" - Biuletyn Edukacji Medialnej <a href="http://www.kul.pl/biuletyn-edukacji-medialnej,art_33689.html">http://www.kul.pl/biuletyn-edukacji-medialnej,art_33689.html</a> Journal of the Theological Conception of Media Education. Published since 2004. Journal "Media Education" - Educacija Medialna <a href="http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~techedu/edu_med_kw/ramka/tresc.html">http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~techedu/edu_med_kw/ramka/tresc.html</a> Was published in 1995-2003. Journal "It's Easier to Study" - Biuletyn "Uczyć łatwiej" - edukacja medialna (2010) <a href="http://www.uczyplatwiej.pl/images/stories/edukacja_medialna/biuletyn_edukacja_internet.pdf">http://www.uczyplatwiej.pl/images/stories/edukacja_medialna/biuletyn_edukacja_internet.pdf</a> From 1992 to 2012 Polish media educators published more than ten monographs, teaching aids, programs on mass media education. The list of the published literature for universities that specialize in journalism, advertising, film making and television is much longer.
3	Key topics of media studies	Media education, media literacy, media competence, media language, media audience, media technologies, media agencies, media representations, theory and history of media culture and media education, media violence, media education technologies, etc.
4	Grant support for media education movement	Grant support for media education projects is realized in Poland both by governmental institutions and by foreign funds (for example, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation)
5	Positive and negative tendencies in media education development	Media education is not compulsory yet (excluding specialized colleges of higher education, schools, and faculties that train media professionals). Difficulties of media education development at the present stage are connected with: - lack of well-trained media teachers; - lack of up-to-date media education textbooks and learning aids for different audiences.

## Conclusions

Analysing the history of media education in the post-communist period Polish experts raise questions: Why isn't media studies a universal and compulsory school subject yet? We may have failed to convince the educational authorities to say nothing of the society. Perhaps the ill-will of the authorities shook our determination. Maybe the previous educational approaches proved to be disputable. Or maybe somebody is afraid of active consumers, active citizens and users who are demanding and less liable to manipulation [Drzewiecki, 2010, p.9].

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